

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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P 191015Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5931

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 271

STADIS/EXDIS////////////////////////////////////

FOR AMBASSADOR IRWIN FROM AMBASSADOR AKINS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, SA

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON 1971 OPEC NEGOTIATIONS

REF STATE 12361

1. I TESTIFIED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION BEFORE THE CHURCH SUBCOMMITTEE IN EARLY OCTOBER JUST BEFORE I CAME TO SAUDI ARABIA. THE DEPARTMENT HAS THE TRANSCRIPT WHICH I AM SURE THEY WILL GIVE YOU. I DO NOT HAVE A COPY HERE.

2. THE SUBCOMMITTEE STAFF REPEATED, IN THEIR QUESTIONING, DETAILS I HAD GIVEN THEM PRIVATELY ON THE LIBYAN SHARING AGREEMENT. THEY ASKED ME TO CONFIRM THIS FOR THE RECORD. I TOLD THEM THEY WERE BREAKING THE RULES WE HAD ESTABLISHED, AND I WAS NOT YET PREPARED TO DO THIS PUBLICLY. AS THEY KNEW, I HAD SHOWED SENATORS PROXIMIRE AND HART THE AGREEMENT OVER TWO YEARS AGO; I EXPLAINED WHY IT SHOULD NOT BE RELEASED AND THEY AGREED.

3. IN LIGHT OF THE TOTAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE MIDDLE EAST OIL AND POLITICAL SCENES IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS I WOULD NOT TODAY OBJECT TO THIS RELEASE IF THEY INSIST ON IT. THE DETAILS ARE ALREADY WIDELY KNOWN AND PUBLIC CONFIRMATION PROBABLY WOULDN'T DO MORE HARM. IT MIGHT EVEN DO SOME GOOD DOMESTICALLY.

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RM THE SUBCOMMITTEE ALSO ASKED ME FOR DETAILS OF THE EARLY COMPANY NEGOTIATIONS WITH LIBYA. I GAVE THEM A FULL BRIEFING BUT REFUSED TO MENTION SPECIFIC COMPANIES; ALTHOUGH I DID MENTION BRIEFLY ESSO'S LEADING ROLE; THIS WAS ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE TESTIMONY BE HELD CONFIDENTIAL. I TOLD THEM THE DEPARTMENT'S RELATIONS WITH THE COMAPNIES WERE EXCELLENT; THAT THIS WAS IMPORTANT TO THE DEPARTMENT AND THE USG, AND THAT THE CONFIDENCE AND THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION WOULD END IF I REPEATED - EVEN IN EXECUTIVE SESSION - DETAILS ON THE POSITIONS OF INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES.

5. THE COMMITTEE STAFF SAID THEY THOUGHT THE COMPANIES SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO GIVE THIS INFORMATION, NOT THAT THEY SHOULD DECIDE THEMSELVES WHETHER IT SHOULD BE GIVEN.

6. I STRONGLY SUSPECT THAT THEIR PURPOSE IN CALLING YOU IS TO GRILL YOU ON THE ROLE OF THE VARIOUS COMPANIES IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH LIBYA AND PROBABLY TEHRAN IN 1970 AND 1971; AND THEN EITHER TO PREPARE LEGISLATION COMPELLING THE COMPANIES TO MAKE ALL INFORMATION AVAILABLE OR (MORE PROBABLY) TO GET SUPPORT FOR SENATOR JACKSON'S PROPOSAL TO PUT GOVERNMENT MEMBERS ON THE BOARDS OF ALL THE MAJOR OIL COMPANIES.  
AKINS

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, US CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS, NEGOTIATIONS, PRICES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 19 JAN 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974JIDDA00271  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** DC ALTERED  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** P750001-1662  
**From:** JIDDA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** STADIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** STADIS  
**Reference:** 74 STATE 12361, STATE 12361  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 19 AUG 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <19 AUG 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <12 DEC 2002 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON 1971 OPEC NEGOTIATIONS  
**TAGS:** ENRG, PGOV, US, SA, LY, OPEC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005